

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 are amended, and new claims 5 and 6 are added. Support for amended claims 1 and 2 can be found, for example, in Fig. 5. Claim 3 is amended to correct a minor informality. Support for new claims 5 and 6 can be found, for example, in original claims 2 and 3. Accordingly, no new matter is added. In view of at least the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Allowed Claim

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claim 4.

II. Claim Objection

Claim 3 is objected to for failing to conclude with a period. This objection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant amends claim 3 to conclude with a period. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the amendment overcomes the objection. Applicant thus respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to claim 3.

III. Rejection of Claims

Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over O'Neal (U.S. Patent No. 5,064,157) in view of White (U.S. Patent No. 982,105); and claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over O'Neal in view of White, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Saunders, IV (U.S. Patent No. 4,700,919). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

O'Neal and White, alone or in a permissible combination, do not disclose or suggest "wherein the part-spherical recesses of the opposedly mounted clamp elements have a smooth inner surface and the part spherical knob of each of the first and second ends has a smooth surface," as recited in independent claim 1 (emphasis added).

The Office Action acknowledges that O'Neal does not disclose a crossbrace being formed at each end with a part-spherical knob, the clamps having separate elements formed with a part-spherical recess for reception of the crossbrace knob. However, the Office Action alleges that White remedies this deficiency by teaching a clamp assembly including two separate clamp elements where both clamp halves form a spherical cavity for retaining a spherical knob. For the reasons discussed below, Applicant submits that White does not remedy the deficiencies of claim 1.

White merely discloses piping clamp members 2 and 3 that include a hemi-spherical socket 12, which hold a ball 10 that includes scorings provided on its surface. See White, for example, column 1, lines 39-42 and column 2, lines 67-72. The hemi-spherical socket 12 also include scorings provided on their inner surfaces. In this respect, the inner surface of each hemi-spherical socket and the outer surface of the ball is rough. The roughened surface of the socket of White coacts with the scorings of the ball to hold the clamping member at any angle. See White, for example, col. 2, lines 67-72.

Accordingly, White does not disclose or suggest that "the part-spherical recesses of the opposedly mounted clamp elements have a smooth inner surface and the part spherical knob of the first and second ends have a smooth surface," as recited in independent claim 1. Thus, White fails to remedy the deficiencies of O'Neal. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 1.

Claim 3 depends from claim 1. Applicant thus respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 3 for at least the reasons discussed above, as well as for the additional features it recites.

As noted above, claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over O'Neal in view of White, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Saunders. Applicant submits that claim 2 is patentable over the applied references for at least the reasons discussed above, as well as

for the additional features it recites. For example, Saunders does not disclose "two fasteners [that] are provided for each clamp for engagement through these two apertures in each opposing element of each clamp so as to clamp each of them to both the handlebar and the respective crossbrace knob," wherein each clamp is adapted to be opposedly mounted on the handlebar.

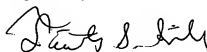
Saunders merely discloses two separate jaw-forming parts 76A and 76B that are positioned adjacent to each other and attached to each other by fasteners 78. See Saunders, for example, Fig. 2. Saunders further discloses a ball 50, which is attached to an end of arm 18, that is held by the two separate jaw-forming parts 76A and 76B. Importantly, the fasteners 78 only connect the two separate jaw-forming parts 76A and 76B to each other, rather than connecting each of the jawing-forming parts 76A and 76B to both a handlebar and a crossbrace knob of a cross brace. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Saunders fails to remedy the deficiencies of the alleged combination of O'Neal and White. Applicant thus respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 2.

IV. Conclusion

In view of at least the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Timothy S. Smith
Registration No. 58,355

JAO:TSS/tjx

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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